Production target of bio-diesel

4554. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to promote production of bio-diesel in the country as a substitute for fossil fuel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of production of bio-diesel at present in the country; and

(d) the Eleventh Five Year Plan target for the same and the action proposed by Government to achieve the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SAHU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Rural Development has been identified as the nodal Ministry for processing the recommendations of the Planning Commission's Committee on the Development of Bio-fuel (2003). The Committee recommended launching of a National Mission on Bio-Diesel with special focus on the plantation of jatropha, the seed of which forms the feedstock for production of bio-diesel. Accordingly, it is proposed to take up a demonstration programme involving plantation of 5 lakh hectares of bio-fuel plantation over a period of 5 years.

(c) and (d) At present, there is no organized framework in the country for bio-diesel production and marketing on commercial scale. Under the demonstration phase of the national mission on bio-diesel, which is expected to be co-terminus with the Eleventh Five Year Plan, about 6 lakh metric tones of bio-diesel is likely to be produced annually from the 5 lakh hectares of bio-fuel plantation.

Condition of suspension bridge on Matherd River

4555. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2840 given in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd August, 2006 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that condition of the bridge linking Nandla and other villages is actually deplorable;

(b) if so, the action being taken by Government to properly repair and maintain the bridge and make it fit for human use; and

(c) the action being contemplated against the officials for giving wrong information?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTAPATIL): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Conference of Project Director of DRDA

4556. SHRI RAVULACHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Conference of Project Directors of Districts Rural Development Agency has taken place;

(b) if so, the details of discussion held and decisions arrived at;

(c) whether DRD As are playing a vital role as catalyst of development in rural India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir. The last Conference of Project Directors of Districts Rural Development Agencies took place on 16th and 17th October, 2006.

(b) In the Conference, detailed discussions were held on NREGA, NFFWP, SGRY, SGSY, DRDA Admn., National Rural Housing Policy and permanent lAY wetlist;, Area Development Programmes, Drinking Water, Total Sanitation Campaign, Monitoring and online reporting. After the detailed discussions the Project Directors/CEOs were divided into six groups assigning separate issues/schemes. The leaders of the groups made presentations on the issues assigned and submitted their recommendations. The conference concluded with appreciation of the recommendations with the need for convergence of various programmes for rural development.